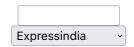


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NEWS

Stage artistes take a bow for Sunshine Boy of theatre

Theatre personalities pay tribute to Hosi Vasunia over food, wine at NCPA; recall memories of working with the star

Express Features Service

Mumbai, March 24: FOR hard drinkers like the late Hosi Vasunia, there were enough pegs to go around.

The rest toasted with theatre whiskey. Veterans from the Mumbai stage gathered on Tuesday at the National Centre for the Performing Arts to pay their last respects to a man who had made a career out of making people laugh—theatre's Sunshine Boy.

And the organisers made sure guests remembered only the good Advertisement times. Raell Padamsee, the brain behind the event, knew that a large party with sumptuous food and drink was the way he would want to be remembered.

As Alyque Padamsee led the way, Ronnie Screwalla, Jamshed Bhabha, Dolly Thakore, Anjan Srivastava and Sam Kerawalla among others agreed that comedy would not be the same without him. "He had an enormous temper, but a bigger heart," toasted Alyque.

A one-hour presentation included readings from his famous plays—Mass Appeal, Ah, Norman and Rummy Game by Kunal Vijayakar, Farid Currim and Cyrus Broacha—followed by an audio-visual with a recap of his work.

Kerawalla's even considering pausing shows of The Sunhsine Boys, Vasunia's last play before he passed away. "No one can do it like him. It won't be the same," said the director who knew Vasunia over 45 years.

Many young faces in the crowd reminisced about starting their acting careers under his tutelage. Cyrus Broacha, whose acting career was launched at 14 in Brighton Beach Memoirs, said he learned to embrace theatre as a community from his mentor.

"Backstage at a Hosi play, there would always be a party going on and everyone hung around together even outside work. I'll always hang on to that community feeling I picked up from him, " he said.

Actor Tanaaz Currim reaclled her first role, as his nubile wife in Baby Doll. "I had to wear a short skirt and was very conscious of my chubby legs. But he said, 'Don't be silly, I'm old enough to be your father' and that put me at ease," she said.

She didn't work with him on her first play, but Perizaad Zorabian recalled Vasunia meeting her backstage and saying, "It's good another Parsi girl has joined the theatre.'







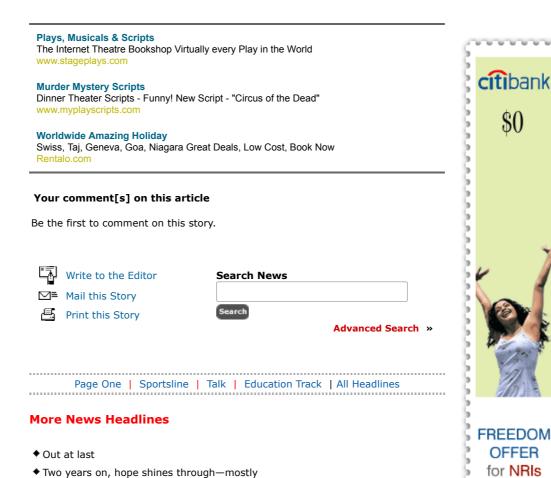












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